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ABSTRACT

This publication is designed to assist local supervisors of vocational and technical education in clarifying their role and function in improving instruction. Major ideas and guidelines are presented in a discussion of: (1) the supervision process, including the role of supervision, four principles of supervision, and supervisory functions, (2) the duties and responsibilities of the supervisor with respect to program administration, classroom management and procedures, instructional staff, instructional media, research, administrative personnel, budget planning, public relations, guidance, and program and student evaluation, and (3) suggestions for evaluating supervisory results. A bibliography is included. (SB)

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LOCAL VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION SUPERVISION

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1973

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The Center's mission is to strengthen the capacity of state educational systems to provide effective occupational education programs consistent with individual needs and manpower requirements by:

- Conducting research and development to fill voids in existing knowledge and to develop methods for applying knowledge.
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FOREWORD

This publication is designed to assist local supervisors of vocational and technical education programs in clarifying their role and function in improving instruction. Its compact nature presents only major ideas and guidelines in performing the supervisory function, with a bibliography for those desiring to explore in greater depth. The author identifies specific duties and responsibilities of supervisors and discusses the elements of instruction, guidance, research, budgeting, public relations, and evaluation as they relate to the supervisory process.

The profession is indebted to Darrell L. Parks, Administrative Specialist, Curriculum and Instruction, Great Oaks Joint Vocational School District, Cincinnati, Ohio for his scholarship in the preparation of this report. Recognition is also due Fred Miner, Clover Park School District, Tacoma, Washington; and William A. Korizek, Helena Vocational-Technical Center, Helena, Montana, for their critical review of the manuscript prior to final revision and publication. Wesley E. Budke, Assistant Director, Information Utilization at The Center, coordinated the publication's development.

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INTRODUCTION

The duties and responsibilities of an educational supervisor are different from those of a teacher. Supervisors play an entirely different kind of role, and how one perceives and performs in that role is almost more important than any other consideration.

The primary function of a local supervisor of vocational and technical education is to improve instruction for secondary, post-secondary and adult students enrolled in vocational and technical education programs. Today, supervision is generally seen as leadership that encourages a continuous involvement of all personnel in a cooperative attempt to achieve the most effective educational services. Good supervision is a helping activity.

The primary purpose of this paper is to provide the reader with a more clearly defined understanding of the role and functions of a local supervisor of vocational and technical education programs. In a concise and straightforward manner, it will address itself to: What is supervision? What does it mean? How do supervisors work effectively? and, What does research have to say about instructional leaders?

Due to the compact nature of this paper, only major ideas and findings are presented. The bibliography may be utilized to identify more detailed information for further study.

THE SUPERVISION PROCESS

What is supervision? Who is the supervisor? What does he do? Questions such as these have been asked many times with reference to those who bear the label of educational supervisor.

Although numerous attempts have been made to answer such questions, the search continues because throughout history both the perceived and actual role of the educational supervisor have been in a constant state of change.

Needless to say, however, the recognition of the supervisor's role in the educational process is one of increasing significance. This is especially apparent in vocational education with the increasing emphasis upon local program supervision.

Supervisory Role

For the purpose of this publication, supervision is defined as a leadership process determined to foster continuing cooperative involvement by personnel in their attempt to achieve the most beneficial educational results (Franseth, 1961). Good supervision, as is true of good teaching, possesses the highest possible regard for personality,

> it sustains rather than snoops;
> it is more inspirational than inspectional;
> it is analytical rather than arbitrary;
> it is kindly rather than coercive; and withal
> it is consistent, constructive, cooperative and helpful (Peterson and Swanson, 1953).

Based upon such a definition of supervision, the supervisor's function is recognized as one of helping teachers achieve their optimum potential as teachers. The supervisor makes it possible for teachers to help themselves become more skilled in performing their tasks. A supervisory role is one of supporting, assisting and sharing rather than directing.

Principles of Supervision

Four major principles of supervision are presented here to serve as guidelines or reference points in planning and fulfilling the supervisory role.

The first principle considers the effectiveness of supervision in terms of teaching and learning improvement. It appears to be most effective when it contributes significantly to the solution of problems and the accomplishment of goals considered important by the teachers and the supervisors.

Secondly, good supervision fosters meaningful involvement of teachers and other school personnel in making and carrying out plans about the things that affect them. This includes having teachers help decide what supervisory assistance will be most helpful.

A third principle of good supervision provides an atmosphere of acceptance, support, and understanding which helps people experience feelings of worth and which helps them learn better ways of working toward the school's objectives.

A scientific approach to problems which help people act on the basis of careful study of adequate and accurate information is the last major principle of effective supervision.

In summary, successful supervisors: are democratic, people oriented, well informed, are able to see situations as others do, practice group centered leadership, possess a scientific and analytical attitude, and help others to use their energies creatively.

Supervisory Functions

Consideration here will be directed toward the more specific duties and responsibilities of the local vocational education supervisor in filling his purpose.

A vocational education supervisor's job is that of an instructional and curriculum specialist. He concentrates on the task of assisting teachers to improve the quality of instruction, and is heavily involved in curriculum development and improvement.

To achieve this objective, the supervisor must perform a wide range of functions. These functions must contribute to a team effort that brings together individuals with specific vocational needs that can be met through an effective instructional process. In fulfilling these functions, a supervisor must:

1) Direct and coordinate the total vocational education program for which he is responsible at the local level.

2) Provide leadership and assistance in the development of the best possible curriculum for the students being served.

3) Provide leadership and assistance in the improvement of teaching techniques.

4) Assist with the recruitment, selection and orientation of instructional staff personnel and in the development of appropriate in-service training activities.

5) Assist the instructional staff with the selection of teaching materials, equipment and supplies.

6) Work in close cooperation with local administrative personnel to coordinate and improve the total educational program.

7) Provide leadership and assistance in local research endeavors in identifying vocational education needs and improving the instructional programs.

8) Assist each teacher in planning a budget which will provide the necessary equipment, supplies and materials for an effective educational program.

9) Be a functioning part of an effective public information program and maintain, as an individual, desirable public relations with all concerned.

10) Cooperate with guidance personnel in providing for effective guidance and counseling techniques in the testing, placement and follow-up of vocational students.

11) Evaluate continuously the total vocational education program with the administration and staff in terms of stated objectives so that improved instructional procedures will result.

12) Assist the teacher in developing an understanding of student evaluation and an effective student evaluation program.

13) Promote a team effort with all other vocational education agencies represented within the community.

14) Develop annual and five-year plans for a complete vocational education program.

15) Participate in and encourage teacher support of district, state and national vocational education professional organizations.

In summary, a supervisor's functions are comprehensive, including the dimensions of program development, maintenance and evaluation. Such functions imply careful selection and explicit orientation of individuals who are expected to perform in a supervisory capacity.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SUPERVISOR

In accord with the 15 major functions reviewed in the preceding section, the following is a prescriptive listing of specific duties and responsibilities of the local supervisor.

Program Administration

It is the major responsibility of the local supervisor to have a knowledge and understanding of state and federal standards and regulations as they apply to his particular program. He should demonstrate a familiarity with all vocational programs ranging from career education offerings to manpower training programs and special offerings for the disadvantaged and handicapped. Such a familiarity is essential if the supervisor is to see his own particular program in proper perspective and capitalize upon opportunities which may be beneficial to his clientele.

It is up to the local supervisor to have expertise in obtaining funding for the development of new and exemplary programs as well as soliciting support for needed improvement and expansion of existing program offerings. This responsibility would include:

1) Working in cooperation with the curriculum advisory committee or the administration in implementing new programs and updating existing ones.

2) Coordinating and preparing courses of study and delineating and supplementing content to meet the needs of the program.

3) Working with teachers in developing programs and informing all teachers of the program operation.

Classroom Management and Procedures

The local supervisor should be capable of demonstrating and

directing instructional personnel in the employment of effective classroom and laboratory procedures. Such procedures would include the routine mechanics of classroom operation such as recording attendance and obtaining supplies, as well as planning effective lessons and selecting supportive instructional materials. Other duties include assisting teachers in maintaining a favorable classroom environment, using appropriate evaluative techniques and interpreting the results, and acquainting teachers with self appraisal techniques and methods.

Instructional Staff

The supervisor's responsibilities related to the instructional staff include the dimensions of recruitment and selection of teachers, credential evaluation, staff orientation and the upgrading of professional personnel.

In the area of teacher recruitment and selection, the supervisor must possess and demonstrate a thorough knowledge and understanding of the laws, standards and regulations related to teacher certification. He must also maintain a personal acquaintance with the present staff in order to promote the maintenance of a compatible and complementary instructional body. In addition, the supervisor must be familiar with potential supply sources for competent teachers including qualified candidates from business and industry, area placement bureaus, colleges and universities.

Once potential teacher candidates have been identified, the supervisor must review each respective candidate's credentials in the process of ultimately determining which ones are to be recommended for employment. Such evaluation should focus upon the candidate's job competence and technical background in relation to the respective teaching assignment. Supervisors may solicit assistance in the selection of teaching candidates through personal interviews, telephone calls to the applicant's present or previous employers, and recommendations from previous immediate supervisors or foremen for whom the applicant has worked.

Following the final selection of instructional personnel, the supervisor plays a vital role in orienting such personnel to their new environment and assisting in preparing them for teaching through the offering of formal and informal teacher preparation and improvement programs and activities.

Finally, the supervisor's involvement in appraising the instructional staff in terms of their performance and teaching effectiveness is

essential to the success of the training program. He must schedule designated time blocks in which he will observe each teacher in the laboratory and related classroom on a regular basis to assist in appraising and improving teacher effectiveness. In order to perform this task, the supervisor must develop a positive relationship and a mutual confidence and respect regarding the teacher's role as well as an understanding that the supervisor's involvement is one of assistance and not necessarily that of inspection and evaluation.

Observations should be discussed honestly and openly with each individual teacher and, if in order, specific recommendations should be made regarding the upgrading or modification of an instructional technique or method. Such recommendations should be made in written form with the teacher obtaining a copy at the conclusion of the discussion period. Recommendations should identify precise job targets toward which the teacher will direct his efforts, and a tentative follow-up date for further observation should be mutually agreed upon by the teacher and supervisor to assess the progress. A copy of a proposed teacher observation form is shown in Figure 1.

Instructional Media

With new and specialized instructional media developments occurring constantly, it is virtually impossible for instructors to stay abreast of all such developments. Thus, it is the responsibility of the local supervisor to aid the instructional staff in reviewing instructional media concepts and materials that are new and which may have relevance to the instructional program. Such assistance may include: keeping teachers informed of recent developments in instructional media and its application to the instructional program; developing instructional media priority lists on the basis of both short and long-range goals that have been established for upgrading the instructional program; and assuring that adequate funds are made available for the purchasing of appropriate media equipment and materials.

In addition to the foregoing responsibilities, the supervisor should also develop and promote techniques to orient teachers on the effective use of instructional media as well as devise a system for maintaining an up-to-date inventory of all instructional media equipment and materials.

Administrative Personnel and Teachers

The local supervisor must recognize that the instructional

CLASSROOM VISITATION

Teacher_____ Observer_____ Date_____ Time_____ Class_____

OBSERVATION NOTES

RECOMMENDATIONS

Figure 1.

Follow-up Conference Date_____ Time_____

AREAS CONSIDERED IN VISITATION

1. Evidence of Planning
2. Knowledge of subject matter and Teaching Technique
3. Pupil Reaction
4. General Classroom Management
5. General Classroom Atmosphere
6. Evaluation Practices of Teacher
7. Teachers' Application of Communication Skills
8. Target areas of Teacher

*Additional information may be attached to this form by the observer or teacher.

leadership in an educational agency is a shared responsibility of the local, regional and state supervisory and administrative officials. Therefore, it becomes his responsibility to work cooperatively with all leadership levels to articulate the directions and needs of the total instructional program.

The local supervisor must be able to supply information and make recommendations regarding program scheduling and student enrollment. He must demonstrate expertise in the planning of new facilities and in the modification of existing ones. He should keep the administration informed concerning the growth of his respective vocational program area, the professional growth of his instructional staff, and recognition which has been afforded or is due a particular instructional program. Finally, the local supervisor should serve as the liaison between the administration and the instructional staff on matters of mutual interest and concern.

Specifically, in the area of supervisor-teacher relationships, it is the local supervisor's obligation to:

1) Keep the teaching staff informed of policies and projected plans through group meetings and personal conferences.

2) Accord all teachers the same degree of consideration and understanding.

3) Get to know each teacher in order to be aware of the teacher's strong points as well as his needs.

4) Offer assistance and encouragement where it is needed.

5) Give commendation where it is earned.

In the final analysis, it is this one area, supervisor-teacher relationships, more than any other supervisory responsibility, that justifies and sustains local supervision. If properly performed, local supervision provides the humanizing dimension so often lacking in an instructional program setting.

Research

One aspect of local supervision so often overlooked or minimized amid the pressing concerns of seemingly more immediate issues is that of research. The supervisor must be concerned with research and recognize the benefits, particularly at the local level. His responsibilities in

the area include:

Defining areas requiring research and study.
Helping set up plans and procedures for conducting such activities.
Presenting findings and conclusions.
Interpreting and communicating to others pertinent research in his respective field of vocational education.
Encouraging vocational teachers to try new ideas and methods to improve instruction and learning.
Making use of research findings in evaluating the vocational education curricula of the school.

If the local supervisor carefully defines, plans and conducts research with regard to local program and community needs and concerns, such efforts can be highly rewarding in terms of invaluable information and data essential for program improvement and expansion.

Budget Planning

Although detailed budget planning may be a direct responsibility of the administration, the local supervisor can and should have input in drafting and amending budget proposals and appropriations. Such input is based upon the supervisor's knowledge and understanding of specific instructional program needs. His primary responsibilities in the area include working with the instructional staff and the administration in defining specific instructional program financial needs on the basis of current operation and projections, and assisting the administration in developing short and long-term financial plans for program operation.

Public Relations

According to Peterson and Swanson (1953), public relations is a major responsibility of supervision at the state level. It could also be included as a major responsibility of the local supervisor. An effective public relations program in vocational education over the years justifies the time and energy expended in such an endeavor in terms of relating the training program to community and occupational needs.

Specifically, the local supervisor plays an important role in establishing and maintaining rapport with business and industrial firms that are served by the training programs. One of the oldest and most common techniques employed in vocational education as a means of involving business and industry with the training program is through the use of

advisory committees. Membership on such committees is usually comprised of representatives from appropriate business and industrial concerns. These committees are charged with the responsibility of providing advice and counsel regarding the adequacy of program curriculum, facilities, equipment and operation. Such committees can also assist in identifying present and projected occupational needs in relation to the respective training programs.

The local supervisor should concentrate a portion of his professional time and talents in the organization and effective use of advisory committees in order to maximize their contributions to the training programs.

Other public relations activities requiring supervisory attention from time to time include the use of the newspaper and broadcasting media, affiliating with local community service club organizations and agencies, and promoting positive program images within and between training programs with which he is associated.

Lest it be overlooked, the local supervisor must constantly realize that the best public relations come through the students' acceptance of and the quality of the training program in which they are enrolled, and their enthusiasm in relating this to their peers, parents and the public. Therefore, it is imperative that all of the supervisor's efforts, whatever they may be, address themselves to enhancing the quality of the training programs for which he is responsible.

Guidance

Guidance should be looked upon as an educational process that goes on continuously throughout the student's educational career. The efficiency of the vocational education program is determined largely by how well the staff understands the program, appreciates its scope and actively participates in attaining established goals. Effective supervision seeks to guide teachers in recognizing and accepting general aims and purposes and then working toward realizing these goals. In cooperation with local guidance personnel, guidance practices may include the promoting of the following activities:

Use of consultant services.
Use of guidance records to give an accurate account of each student's past performance.
Use of career information for job guidance.
Orientation of pupils entering the vocational program.
Evaluation of all program goals by teachers and supervisors.

A planned program for placement of students.
Assistance in planning job opportunities.
Cooperation with the existing employment agencies.
The development and conscientious use of suitable follow-up survey forms to determine student success on the job.

Program and Student Evaluation

Evaluation is a continuous process involving the local supervisor, the administration and the instructional staff. Efforts must be coordinated in order for program outcomes to be interpreted in relation to program goals for students, parents, and the general community. Such evaluative efforts are important from two viewpoints: the assessment of total program results and the appraisal of individual student performance and progress.

In terms of the total program evaluation, the supervisor must play a major role in the development and validation of appropriate evaluation criteria which are based upon the goals and objectives of the vocational education program. Such criteria should be developed through the assistance of the respective program advisory committees and carry the endorsement of the local administration.

Once the evaluative criteria have been established, it is then the local supervisor's responsibility to provide direction and assistance in the continuous application of such criteria in an attempt to appraise and assess the effectiveness of the training program. Specific attention must be directed toward:

Curriculum and program congruency.
Physical plant facilities and equipment.
Organizational structure and staffing.
Teacher-student relationships.
Student interest.
Guidance and counseling services.
Instructional program-community relations.
Financial effort and the ability of the community to finance vocational education programs.

Regarding the appraisal of individual student performances and programs, the local supervisor must work closely with the instructional staff in developing and applying valid student appraisal criteria and techniques. This is especially important if members of the instructional staff have been recruited directly from the business/industry community and possess little or no knowledge of appropriate student evaluation procedures.

In appraising the programs of students enrolled in a vocational education program, the supervisor must emphasize to the teacher the importance of basing such appraisal on student behavioral outcomes. In discussion with teachers, emphasis should be given to the concept that through the application of such an appraisal process, not only can student performance be measured, but valuable information is also made available regarding the teaching-learning process, the curriculum and the facilities.

Finally, the supervisor should be instrumental in the design and use of an effective placement and follow-up program directed toward students who have been enrolled in a vocational education program. This one dimension, more than any other one in the area of evaluation, has been overlooked or ignored in attempting to determine the adequacy of a vocational education program. If the training program is not producing a salable product in terms of an employable student, such a condition will be brought to the front with an effective student placement and follow-up program.

EVALUATING SUPERVISORY RESULTS

Mager (1967) identifies three phases which relate to the supervisory procedure. They are:

1) Determine and describe what is to be achieved.

2) Do what is necessary to achieve the desired result.

3) Check to determine to what extent desired results have been realized.

What are the ways in which a local supervisor of vocational education can judge his effectiveness? In evaluating his efforts, the supervisor should examine at least two phases constantly: The management of his supervisory activities and the results he achieves.

With regard to the management dimension, questions of significance include:

1) Do I set up a schedule of activities for each week?

2) Am I flexible in my schedule without becoming disturbed?

3) Do I get upset when my plans don't go as I hoped?

4) Do I check things off I've accomplished?

5) Do I get my feelings hurt?

6) Am I able to take criticism?

7) Am I able to put myself in the other person's position?

8) Am I making a sincere effort to learn more about the staff?

9) Do I consult with those who will be affected by an action before I take it?

10) Do I live up to my commitments? (Wiles, 1967:293-94.)

Although the above list of questions is no guarantee to supervisory success, it does provide a barometer against which general supervisory activities can be assessed.

In terms of determining the extent to which desired results have been achieved, there are other important questions which can serve as indicators of whether or not positive direction is being established. Important questions in judging the effectiveness of a supervisor include:

1) How many more teachers are experimenting?

2) Has there been an increase in the calls for help in thinking through problems?

3) Has there been a change in the nature of the problems presented?

4) Is there increased demand from the staff for professional materials?

5) Is there more sharing of materials among members of the staff?

6) Is the faculty identifying the problem it has to face farther ahead so that it isn't confronted with so many emergencies?

7) Is there a greater use of evidence in deciding issues?

8) Is there within the faculty a greater acceptance of difference?

9) How many more business and industry representatives are involved in planning vocational education programs?

10) How have the educational facilities been better adapted to stimulate or achieve a realistic job environment?

11) How many more teachers are active in professional organizations?

12) How many more teachers are seeking in-service experience?

13) How many more teachers are planning with other teachers?

14) How many more pupils are being included in planning and evaluation?

15) Is a larger percentage of the staff assuming a responsibility for the improvement of the program?

16) Are staff meetings becoming more faculty directed?

17) How many more teachers are using a wider range of instructional materials and media?

18) What is the placement and follow-up record of students enrolled in the various vocational programs?

19) How many new and/or exemplary programs have been added to the curriculum?

20) Are there evidences of effective communications and understandings with the general public regarding the vocational education program? (Wiles, 1967.)

SUMMARY

Basically, a supervisor's activities involve creating relationships and understandings that will enable him to work effectively to improve instruction with all persons concerned about curriculum.

The environment in which the vocational education supervisor functions is multi-dimensional. He must establish and maintain positive relationships with teachers, administrators, lay groups, students and colleagues.

Perhaps Francis Keppel (1966) best set the stage for the supervisor's role in today's educational setting when he stated:

> The first revolution in American education was a revolution of quantity. Everyone was to be provided the chance for an education of some sort. That revolution is almost won in the schools and is on its way in higher education. The second revolution is equality of opportunity. That revolution is under way. The next turn of the wheel must be a revolution in quality.

It is this last revolution, quality, that becomes the supervisor's primary responsibility.

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